

Governor Jim Doyle
Maj. Gen. Albert Wilkening
The Adjutant General
Ed Gleason, Administrator
Vol. 13, Issue No. 1 Jan./Feb. 2004



WEM Digest

Issues and Events for Wisconsin's Emergency Management

Wisconsin Winter 2004 - lots of snow and cold

By Rusty Kapela
National Weather Service

Temperatures from the mid 50's to the extreme of -27 below topped with an average snowfall have highlighted Wisconsin's winter weather.

Overall, January 2004 was colder than normal across Wisconsin. However, the new year started off warm with a high of 54 degrees in Milwaukee and 49 in Madison on January 2. Northern Wisconsin communities were in the 30's.

The mercury took a dive at the end of January. On January 30, the state was in a deep freeze. Extreme minimums reported -10 in Milwaukee, -14 at Green Bay, -18 at Wausau, -19 at La Crosse, -20 at Rhinelander, and -22 at Eau Claire.

The coldest recorded temperature in the state for the month of January 2004 was -27 which was reported in



Snow, sleet and ice not only covered windshields but also caused slippery driving conditions for Wisconsin motorists.

Phillips (January 29-31), Sarona (January 31) and Drummond (January 30).

Monthly precipitation was generally 50 to 80% of normal, but some locations had 90 to 100% of normal. Monthly snowfall was

above normal near Lake Michigan and Lake Superior thanks to the lake-effect machine. The Milwaukee area picked up 22.7 inches of snow during January, while most of the rest of the state

Continued on Page 3

Terrorism preparedness to highlight conference

Homeland Security will be a major focus of the 37th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

The conference is sponsored by Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM). This year's conference will be held March 30-31, 2004 at the Paper Valley Hotel in Appleton. Over 500 participants are expected to attend.

Some of the presentations include a recap of the TopOff2 plague outbreak exercise held in Chicago, an overview of available national weapons of mass destruction training, a session on the mad cow disease outbreak, and overview of the 2003 northeast blackout.

In addition, national expert Grady Bray will be the featured luncheon speaker and will discuss the impacts of stress on emergency responders.

WEM will also have on display its new communications equipment and portable tower. In addition, a room will be available for vendors.

The registration fee for the 2004 conference is \$135 and includes both the luncheon and dinner banquet on March 30. On page 7 of the WEM Digest are conference materials and registration form. Registrations are due by March 24.

Uncertain times ahead

A number of times in this column I have shared my thoughts about the value of emergency management. It is a discipline that is mandated at the federal, state and local levels and consists of the cycle of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Those components are intertwined and, as a whole, form a recognized and effective approach for dealing with disasters.

Over the past several years, emergency management has been weakened. The aftermath of September 11 still reverberates through our society and we have seen tremendous change at the federal level to ensure we are prepared for future events. These changes have trickled down to the state and local levels and also impact the way we do business.

Improvements have been made and I applaud them. Prevention and detection efforts have been improved with the creation of the Transportation Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). We have witnessed an increase in first responder grants to ensure our front line public safety personnel are ready. We have also seen the rise in importance of the Office of Domestic Preparedness as the administrator of those grants.

One unfortunate unintended consequence of all this change is the shrinking influence of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As FEMA's influence weakens, so does that of state and local emergency management programs. I raise this issue, not as a matter of self-preservation for those programs, but out of real concern for the foundation that supports us when disaster strikes.

Planning is a key component of preparedness, an important phase of the emergency management cycle. A recent proposal strips the responsibility for preparedness from FEMA and puts it with the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP). I question the logic of separating it from the other phases of the cycle and believe such a move will be detrimental to the overall function.

Further compromising emergency management and FEMA's influence is a one-stop shopping proposal for federal grants. It would remove the Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) from FEMA and place their administration with ODP. EMPG funds have been used over the years to build emergency management capacity and foster the partnership between FEMA, the states and local governments that is key to any disaster response. I see that partnership weakening if EMPG is combined with other funds and loses its identity.

Also exacerbating these developments is the President's budget proposal that limits EMPG funding to 25% of personnel costs. The EMPG funds that come into Wisconsin are primarily used (88%) to support personnel costs at the state and local levels. This proposal would certainly compromise the stability of our programs and is in direct conflict with what we have always understood as the stated intent of the funding.

I have raised these issues to evoke your thoughts and participation in this discussion. I want to make the public safety community aware of these issues and pose some questions. What is the future of



Ed Gleason
WEM Administrator

emergency management? Are these changes a part of its natural evolution? Is there some better and more efficient system to take its place or is there a need to better integrate efforts as a new system evolves.

I, for one, firmly believe in the role of emergency management. Although change is inevitable, and often is for the good, change can do harm when it is not fully discussed and logically debated. Emergency management is a proven system and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery are intertwined and I believe must remain so.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "E. J. Gleason".

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Winter Continued From Page 1

(except for the far north)
gathered 8 to 15 inches.

The first widespread snowstorm of the winter season occurred on January 26-27. Hurley received the most snowfall with 12 inches. The rest of the state had snow totals of 4 to 8 inches.

Another widespread snowstorm moved across the state February 1-3. Total snowfall amounts ranged from 3 to 5 inches across the eastern third of the state to 8 to 12 inches in the northwest and west central parts of the state.

A few days later, on February 5-6, another winter storm hit Wisconsin. Heaviest snow accumulations were reported in southwest and south central Wisconsin with 8-10 inches of snow falling in parts of Vernon, Grant, Adams, Sauk, Marquette, and Columbia Counties.

Also, parts of east central and northeast areas were hit hard as well. Marinette and Door Counties saw up to 10 inches. Elsewhere around the state, snowfall amounts generally ranged from 1 to 5 inches.

Current snow depths as of February 3 ranged from 3 to 10 inches across the southern part of the state to 15 to 25 inches across the northern portions of Wisconsin. Some locations in Door and Kewaunee Counties had 25 to 34 inches on the ground as a result of a series of lake-effect snows on top of general, widespread snow systems.

Although not perfect across the entire state, 2004 so far has offered the best snow conditions for outdoor sports in the past five winters.

Peterson named Bureau Director

Steve Peterson has been chosen as Director of the Bureau of Planning and Preparedness of Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM).

Programs in the bureau include Emergency Operations Planning, Exercise and Training, Radiological Emergency Preparedness and EPCRA. The position was previously held by Christine Bacon, who retired in December 2003.

Steve was a colonel with the Wisconsin Army National Guard. He recently stepped down as Chief of Staff for the Army National Guard, a position he held since 1999.

Steve is originally from western Wisconsin. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and a master's degree in organizational behavior from Silver Lake College, Manitowoc.



**Steve Peterson
Bureau Director
WEM Planning &**

Steve is a familiar face to emergency management. He has worked closely with WEM during floods, storms and work stoppages.

Wisconsin Emergency Management welcomes and congratulates Steve on his new position!

Training offered on disease outbreaks

By Donna Gilson
WI Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

West Nile virus, mad cow disease, monkeypox and anthrax have recently made national headlines. Would you know how to respond if an outbreak occurred in your community?

Dr. Yvonne Bellay, state humane officer and epidemiologist with the State of Wisconsin, Animal Health Division, can help. She's put together a variety of presentations and fact sheets on zoonotic diseases, and can present at your meetings free of charge.

A zoonotic disease is one that can pass back and forth between animals

and humans. Presentations can be tailored to your needs in both content and length, whether you're looking for a full-day seminar or part of a meeting agenda, focusing on one disease or providing an overview of the whole array of potential zoonotic diseases. In addition, she can provide a variety of take-home materials.

Some of the topics include anthrax, botulism, monkeypox, plague, and West Nile virus. In addition, general food and water safety issues can also be discussed.

For more information, contact Dr. Bellay at 608-224-4888 or yvonne.bellay@datcp.state.wi.us.

State to receive \$41 million for Homeland Security

By Mike Kunesch
Office of Justice Assistance

Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) is busy obligating the latest round of federal terrorism preparedness grants to local response agencies in Wisconsin. Under the 2004 Counterterrorism Grant, Wisconsin has been allocated \$41,173,000. OJA, which is administering the federal terrorism grant program, has 60 days to finalize obligation of 80 percent of the money to local communities.

The Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) has divided the 2004 Counterterrorism Grant into three separate areas. The areas are the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP) and Citizen Corps Program. These programs are part of a single grant award to Wisconsin, but are separate programs whose dollars cannot be intermingled.

The purpose of the three programs is to continue the process of improving the capacity of state and local governments to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism. Under federal guidelines, states are encouraged to employ regional approaches to planning and preparedness and to adopt regional response structures whenever appropriate to meet the needs identified through the local assessments and in state strategic plans.

Approximately \$31,251,000 is allocated towards the State Homeland Security Program. SHSP is designed to enhance the capability of state and local governments to prevent, deter, respond to and recover from incidents of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction and cyber attacks.

The Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program provides local law enforcement with funding to enhance capabilities for detecting, deterring, disrupting, and preventing acts of



Door County used terrorism grants to purchase this decon tent and tyvek suits for emergency responders. Photo by Door County Emergency Management

terrorism. ODP has set aside \$9,273,000 in federal terrorism dollars for this program. Goals of LETPP are to have local law enforcement in Wisconsin accumulate, assess and share data pertaining to terrorist activities, and to help address the problems of communications interoperability.

The state will also continue to promote and support the creation of Citizen Corps Councils by making \$649,000 available for local programs. The Citizen Corps program is a national grassroots initiative designed to encourage local emergency response groups and volunteer organizations to come together to prepare for local disaster/emergency responses.

The councils also encourage citizens to get involved in various community safety and disaster relief efforts through programs such as Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Neighbor Watch, Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). In addition, Wisconsin is in the process of establishing a statewide Citizen Corps Council.

All of the terrorism grants must be allocated in a manner consistent

with federal guidelines and the recently approved State of Wisconsin Strategic Plan. Although final allocation amounts are not yet set, here are some of the key allocations and their approximate amount:

- \$12,881,890 in SHSP funding to counties to continue equipping first responders. The allocation formula has been updated based on the recently completed assessment.
- \$4,600,000 for critical local infrastructure protection with emphasis on airports and harbors.
- \$4,200,000 for the continued development of regional specialty teams.
- \$10,000,000 set aside for radio interoperability and information sharing.
- \$4,000,000 for state response efforts.

For more information on the 2004 Counterterrorism Grant Program, contact OJA at 608-266-3323 or go to the OJA website at <http://oja.state.wi.us>.

Critical time for programs

*By Cullen Peltier
WEMA President*

We are facing a very critical time for our emergency management programs. We are once again faced with the challenge of distributing our Homeland Security funding and we have the President's proposed 2005 budget staring us in the face and it isn't very friendly to our programs. The next few months could define the future of emergency management in the State of Wisconsin.

First off, I would like to address the issue of the 2004 Homeland Security Grant distribution. The funding was definitely not what we were envisioning. I look forward to engaging earlier in the process in future distributions so that all our concerns are addressed.

What we need to do now is exactly what we have done in the past. We need to work with the first responders in our communities to allocate the funds in a way that will benefit the citizens of our communities. By doing this, we can once again show that the

county emergency management programs are best suited for distributing this funding. Fortunately, we still have an opportunity for input on the distribution of the funding allocated for fire service, law enforcement, and critical infrastructure protection portions of the grant. Emergency management has representation on each of the committees that will be making these decisions.

I implore those directors that are acting on these committees to take a global approach when helping to distribute these funds and I ask that you work with Wisconsin Emergency Management Association (WEMA) to ensure that the other directors throughout the state are aware of the progress and intent of these committees.

Second, we are facing cuts and changes in the Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG). WEMA will work hard to ensure that our legislators are well aware of the implications these proposed cuts and changes will have on our programs.



Luckily, we are not alone in this fight. We need to work closely with our partners at Wisconsin Emergency Management, Wisconsin Counties Association, and others to make certain that our programs will be able to provide the same level of service, preferably higher, to our communities in the future.

Our ability to assist our communities in preparing for, responding to, mitigating, and recovering from disasters is contingent upon what happens in the next few months.

Finally, remember that we do not operate in a vacuum. The efforts you undertake and the decisions you make will eventually have an impact on other emergency management programs in the state. Let's work together to ensure that our concerns are heard and our best practices are shared.

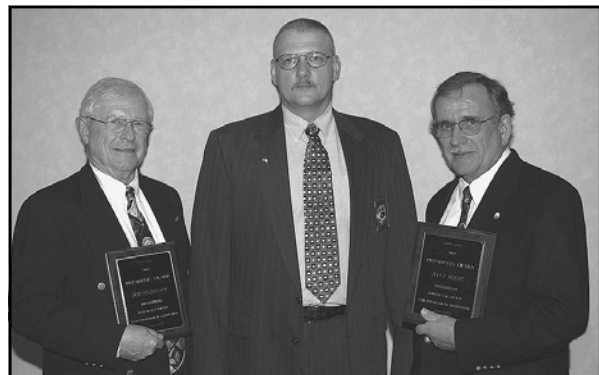
Regional News

Several counties have hired new emergency management directors. Welcome to all!

Tracy Hirtreiter-Yunk is the new **Price County Emergency Management Director**.

Buffalo County has hired **Steve Schiffli** as their new **County Emergency Management Director**.

Sheboygan County has named **Steven Steinhardt** to the new position of **Emergency Management Coordinator**. Steve will be responsible for EPCRA planning and coordination activities with the Sheboygan County Hazardous Materials Team.



Captain Bill Makowski, President of the Fond du Lac County Law Enforcement Executives Association presented awards to County Radio Officer Bob Fishelson (left) and County Alternate Radio Officer Dave Boede (right) on February 11, 2004 for their dedication to law enforcement and emergency management.

State updating mitigation plan

Roxanne Gray
WEM Hazard Mitigation Officer

Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) is in the process of updating the State's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan was originally completed in 2001 and was designed to serve as a guide for reducing the effects of natural hazards within Wisconsin.

The State of Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies the major hazards, assesses the risk and vulnerability to those hazards and includes steps to reduce vulnerability by tapping into state technical and program resources.

New federal regulations require that the plan be revised. States that fail to meet the new requirements

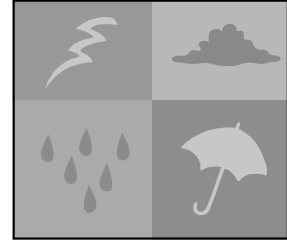
could potentially risk losing federal assistance during disasters.

To help meet these requirements, the Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Team has expanded its membership to include additional federal and state agencies such as Wisconsin Association of Floodplain, Stormwater and Coastal Managers.

WEM is also creating an agency outreach and public participation strategy. The goal is to inform the public about hazard mitigation programs and gather input from local government leaders, businesses and citizens about hazards and risks in their communities. Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Team members will

conduct meetings across the state as well as provide guidance and other information on the WEM website and issue media releases.

Over the next several months, WEM will begin to set the process in motion. If you would like to find out more about the planning process or want to be involved, contact the state mitigation staff at 608-242-3232. Information regarding the State's Hazard Mitigation Program or the current plan are located on the WEM website at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>.



FEMA places importance on local planning efforts

Roxanne Gray
WEM Hazard Mitigation Officer

Communities across Wisconsin have been developing local mitigation plans in hopes to receive federal approval by November 1, 2004. However, the question remains what will happen to communities that fail to meet the mitigation plan deadline.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) set the November 1 deadline. However, when that date has passed, it won't mean the end of planning. Communities can and should continue to develop and adopt plans after that date, and funds to support the planning will continue to be made available through the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) and the Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMGP) Programs.

But the November 1, 2004 is a very important date to keep in mind because there are certain consequences and limitations that will go into effect on that date.

First, HMGP will only be available to states that have approved mitigation plans. Wisconsin is aggressively working on updating and getting federal approval for the state plan.

For disasters declared prior to November 1, 2004, a community without a plan can apply for and receive an HMGP project grant, but must commit to developing the plan while implementing the project.

For federal disasters declared after November 1, 2004, a community without a plan cannot receive HMGP project grant funds. The community may,

however, apply for a planning grant under HMGP funds.

The November deadline also does not affect Pre-Disaster Mitigation grants. A community without an approved plan may apply for PDM funding for plan development, but communities must have an approved plan in order to receive a PDM project grant. This means that the community's mitigation plan must be approved before a project grant is awarded.

Currently, 29 counties, 11 municipalities and three tribal organizations are developing all hazards mitigation plans in Wisconsin. These plans have been funded through Project Impact, HMGP and PDM.

For more information, contact Wisconsin Emergency Management at 608-242-3232.

The 37th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security



**March 30-31, 2004
Radisson Paper Valley Hotel
Appleton, WI**

The 37th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management & Homeland Security

March 30-31, 2004

Radisson Paper Valley Hotel

Appleton, WI

The registration fee for the 2004 Conference is \$135.00. You may pre-register by completing the attached registration form and returning it to Wisconsin Emergency Management no later than March 24, 2004. The registration fee covers the cost of the conference, the noon luncheon and banquet on March 30th. Please be advised that you must pay the registration fee in full, regardless whether you plan to attend all or part of either day's activities. Registration refunds will be approved only upon receipt of cancellation notice by March 24, 2004. As in the past, no exceptions will be made to this rule. All refund checks will be mailed after March 31. We want to remind you to make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. The Paper Valley Hotel (920-733-8000 or 1-800-242-3499) will hold rooms for conferees only until February 27, 2004.

Topical Seminars

Tuesday — March 30, 2004

(Please select two on registration form)

- A. LARGE EVENTS PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF THE 2003 HARLEY DAVIDSON 100TH ANNIVERSARY** — *A panel will review planning and operations for the Harley-Davidson 100th Anniversary held in August of 2003. A question and answer session will follow.*
- B. THE STORM DAMAGE SURVEY: WHAT EMERGENCY MANAGERS NEED TO KNOW** — *Once thunderstorms move through, many times the National Weather Service needs to assess the damage left in their wake. Learn when to expect the National Weather Service to conduct a storm damage assessment and what you can do to help. Discover how to tell the difference between tornado damage and straight-line and downburst damage. Also, learn what the Fujita scale of tornado damage is and how to apply it. In addition, the National Weather Service will cover the severe weather highlights of 2003 and give a general long-range outlook for spring and summer 2004.*
- C. DESIGNING/PLANNING WMD EXERCISES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL** — *This seminar will outline and describe a WMD tabletop exercise template that can be used by local units of government to test both initial response procedures as well as recovery issues. The seminar will focus on how to clearly identify deficiencies noted during an exercise and on the development of concise corrective action recommendations. Presenters will offer suggestions for the use of the WEM exercise monies available to each county.*
- D. WMD TRAINING SCHOOLS: WHAT'S AVAILABLE, HOW TO ACCESS IT** — *Join this panel discussion for the latest information on biological training available from Louisiana State University, radiological training from BECHTEL, and chemical training from the Center for Domestic Preparedness at Fort McClellan, Alabama. Representatives from these schools will be discussing the training courses available at their schools, the registration process, travel logistics and questions that you may have.*
- E. BIOLOGICAL THREATS TO HOMELAND SECURITY – A PRESENTATION BY LSU** — *Louisiana State University, a member of the Department of Homeland Security training consortium, will discuss the threats associated with the use of biological agents and the how to prepare for handling the consequences of a release of a biological agent.*

Breakout Sessions
Tuesday — March 30, 2004
(Please select one on your registration form)

- F. COMMUNICATIONS INTEROPERABILITY – A DEFINABLE PROCESS** - *Interoperability is not an end item in itself; it is a state of readiness. The process required to formulate and maintain a state of readiness is definable and repeatable. The goal must be defined; steps in the process of attaining the goal defined and plans to pursue the goal agreed upon.*
- G. BSE: MAD COWS, MAD DEER, MAD HUMANS – FACTS AND FALLACIES** - *This session consists of a discussion of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. Their cause, diagnosis, symptoms and transmission. It will highlight the safeguards that are in place for preventing BSE contamination of livestock feed and human food, and address the surveillance mechanisms and economic impacts of finding the disease in the U.S.*
- H. ENERGY INTERDEPENDENCIES: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT?** - *The energy infrastructure is under stress. The regional blackout of August 2003 illustrates the impacts that a failure in the energy system can have. We have come to depend so heavily on electricity, natural gas, and oil that they have become necessities, rather than conveniences, of everyday life. When these systems fail, whether it be from natural, accidental, or malicious causes, events can cascade into an emergency quickly. Preparing for energy emergencies requires an understanding of these systems and their interdependencies. This presentation will describe the basics of the energy system in Wisconsin, discuss the obvious and not-so-obvious interdependencies, and relay some experiences from others who have dealt with these types of events.*

Other Conference Highlights

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Noon Luncheon Guest Speaker— **“Emergency Services Stress, The Trauma That Doesn’t Bleed”** - *Grady Bray*

Evening Banquet Guest Speaker— **“Only the Strong Survive”** - *Tom Jardin*

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

Morning General Sessions

8:15 a.m. - **“Partnering for a Disaster Resilient State: Focus Wisconsin”** - *Dr. Paula Scalingi, The Scalingi Group*

9:30 a.m. - **“A Plague Outbreak in Chicago—Lessons Learned from TopOff 2”** - *Ed Buikema, FEMA Region V Director*

10:45 a.m. - **“The Evolution of Emergency Management”** - *Dennis Mileti, Senior Research Scientist, Natural Hazards Research Center, University of Colorado, Boulder*

The conference will end at 12:00 noon

37th ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY

MARCH 30 AND 31, 2004
REGISTRATION FORM

Please print clearly

			TUESDAY MARCH 30	
			Topical Seminars (circle 2)	Breakout Sessions (circle 1)
#1	ATTENDEE NAME	AGENCY		
	ADDRESS, CITY & ZIP	CONTACT PHONE #		
		COUNTY		
#2	ATTENDEE NAME	AGENCY		
	ADDRESS, CITY & ZIP	CONTACT PHONE #		
		COUNTY		
#3	ATTENDEE NAME	AGENCY		
	ADDRESS, CITY & ZIP	CONTACT PHONE #		
		COUNTY		

 **Note: Mail in registrations must be received by March 24, 2004.**

REGISTRATION FEE:

\$135.00 per person

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:

Department of Military Affairs
Division of Emergency Management
Post Office Box 7865

Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7865

WE CANNOT MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS FOR CONFEREES!

FOR WEM OFFICE USE ONLY

CHECK # _____ OTHER _____

INVOICE YES NO

Presenter Vendor



Volk Field hosts emergency management training

Lisa Olson– McDonald
WEM Training Assistant

A new training facility at Volk Field is being used to conduct courses hosted by Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM).



Tim Golden, of the Eau Claire Police Department, uses an extrication saw to cut through a metal pipe while the instructor, Gentry Fox, serves as his spotter.

Photo by Lisa Olson-McDonald

For over five years, WEM has been conducting training classes at the Wisconsin Military Academy at Fort McCoy. Now, WEM is also holding classes at Volk Air Field, located in the village of Camp Douglas.

A conference center with five classrooms and a dormitory for student lodging was built two years ago. The facility provides additional venues for classes as well as an area to perform a variety of emergency response training.

Most WEM courses held at Volk Field are terrorism-related and are sponsored by the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP). The classes provide students a chance to participate in hands-on exercises such as



Photo by Lisa Olson-McDonald

collecting evidence, performing on-site vulnerability assessments, and extrications.

ODP offers national instructors who have vast experience in weapons of mass destruction (WMD) response training. Classes are offered to a variety of first responder groups including fire, law enforcement, EMS and emergency management.

There is no cost to students attending the courses and meals are

included. Students driving farther than 50 miles one way are also eligible for free lodging on base.

Future courses to be held at the Volk Conference Center include: Multi-Hazard Planning for Schools, Crime Scene Management and Law Enforcement Response to WMD.

For more information on training, go to the WEM website at:
<http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>.

Positive response for community disaster training

By Dana Gregory
CERT Training Coordinator

The response to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training continues to be positive as many communities continue to request this training program.

Several Basic CERT training courses have been scheduled for 2004. The CERT program teaches citizens to be prepared and trained to respond in the event of an emergency. The hands on CERT training covers topics such as disaster

preparedness, fire suppression, and basic first aid.

As part of the CERT training, Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) has two cargo trailers containing CERT training supplies. A trailer filled with items such as hard hats, gloves, safety vests, and goggles for students can be delivered to, and picked up from, a CERT training site.

Currently, there are 64 CERT trainers in Wisconsin. The majority of the trainers are from

southeastern Wisconsin. To train additional instructors, WEM is interested in holding CERT Train-the-Trainer courses in other areas of the state. Those interested in becoming a trainer should contact Dana Gregory, CERT Training Coordinator, at (608) 242-3212 or e-mail at dana.gregory@dma.state.wi.us.

For more information on bringing CERT training to your community, contact your county emergency management director or Wisconsin Emergency Management.

State assesses public safety communications

By Alan Wohlferd
WEM Communications Officer

Wisconsin, like most states, is struggling with the public safety communications interoperability problems. Here is a status of what has been done thus far.

Last month, the Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) hired Federal Engineering Inc. from Fairfax, Virginia to conduct an overall assessment of communications interoperability in Wisconsin. The firm will look at what systems are currently in place, what problems exist and offer suggestions on what needs to be done.

It is unlikely that one system will eliminate all communications problems. There will always be pockets of technology that for one reason or another cannot communicate as desired.

Federal Engineering will meet with many state and local public safety groups in the next six months to find out where we are and what particular problems and solutions are being examined. Federal plans to visit many areas around the state, realizing that a solution that may work in Milwaukee may not be needed in Hayward.

Federal Engineering is also compiling an Internet accessible website that will contain current communications technology information to help keep all agencies informed of what is available.

In addition, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has mandated changes to narrowband technology and some federal agencies are moving to P-25 technology in hopes of solving the interoperability issues. Nextel is also



Communications provides a vital function in public safety. Photo courtesy Milwaukee County Emergency Management

proposing a major change for 800 MHz users.

Continued on Page 16

Tower on wheels

Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) has a new portable communications/light tower.

The 80-foot tower self-erects from a trailer and is powered by a 22 kw generator. The fifth wheel unit weighs approximately 14,000 lbs. The tower can be deployed with either of the state's interoperable communications units and can extend radio coverage for miles.

In addition, the top platform has six lights which can light an area about the size of a football field.

WEM Deputy Administrator Al Shanks, Emergency Police Services Deputy Director Rick Risler and Northeast Regional Director Rob Rude were trained on the unit by Tower Solutions in Pine City, Minnesota.



Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) has added a new piece of equipment for interoperable communications. A 21-foot fully self-contained trailer with an ACU 1000 unit was put into service this month. The ACU 1000 is identical to the unit installed in WEM's Mobile Command Center last summer. The ACU 1000 unit when utilized, makes it possible for agencies to communicate with one another using their own frequencies (see article on page 13).

Photo by Rick Risler

New system helps agencies talk to each other

By Rick Risler
Emergency Police Services

Wisconsin Emergency Management has two new portable communications units that allow various agencies and response personnel to talk to each other.

The ACU 1000 is a communications system that allows up to 12 different radios or 11 radios and a phone interconnect and will allow cross frequency communications from various agencies with the radios.

How the ACU 1000 works is it takes any frequency in those 12 radios and rebroadcast the frequency selected after tying two to seven different frequencies together. The system uses a computer to select the different frequencies the operator needs to combine.

It also can tie the different bands of frequencies together

such as low band, high band, the 400 MHz and the 700 and the 800 MHz bands.

An example of how flexible the system is - fire, police, EMS and sheriff's departments could each be on their own radio frequency during an emergency but since their frequencies are tied together with the ACU 1000, they can still communicate with each other.

The unit is only limited by the number of frequencies installed in the radios. Since the frequencies are tied together, however, all conversations can be heard by everyone on those frequencies.

In addition, the ACU 1000 communications system is limited by the footprint or the coverage area of each radio frequency that the operator is tying together.



Wisconsin Emergency Management has ACU 1000 communications systems located in the Mobile Command Center and the new WEM trailer. Emergency Police Services Program makes available the use of the trailer, mobile command post, a portable communication's tower and the communications equipment to augment local emergency response capabilities.

“GETS” Card ensures priority telephone service

By Alan Wohlferd
WEM Communications Officer

Public safety groups have a new card that can help them communicate during an emergency—and it doesn't cost a penny when not in use.

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service or “GETS” cards are similar to a standard telephone calling card but it allows public safety groups a priority phone service when activated.

GETS is administered by the National Communications System (NCS) in the U.S. Department of

Homeland Security. Users are charged a rate of 15 cents per minute. GETS pin numbers allow your call to receive priority service over the public switched telephone network when non emergency calls receive a busy signal.

The GETS system was used extensively during the events of September 11, 2001, with over 18,000 GETS calls successfully placed with a call completion rate of 95 percent.

Most recently during the August 2003 power outage on the east coast, GETS cards were again used extensively.

NCS offers a cellular priority service system as well but this system is only available where local cellular providers participate in the system. Check with NCS or your local cellular provider to see if this service is available in your service area.

You can apply for GETS cards on line at <http://gets.ncs.gov>. It takes less than two weeks to receive your cards. You must designate someone within your agency that will pay for GETS card use and a point of contact if you are applying for multiple GETS cards.

Former mobile medical unit - now command post

By Keith Butler
LaCrosse County Emergency Management

Thanks to a donation by Franciscan Skemp Mayo Health Care, LaCrosse County Emergency Management has a new mobile command post.

The 37-foot bus is being converted to a mobile communications vehicle. It will be used as the backup 9-1-1 Dispatch Center as well as an Incident Command Post for any LaCrosse County public safety agency.

It is equipped with a 15,000 watt generator, air conditioners, and heaters. The space for Incident Command has both a VHF mutual aid

radio and a city of LaCrosse 800 MHz trunking radio.

The dispatch area will have three dispatch work stations. Each workstation will have a computer and a Sprint PCS card to provide wireless access to the Dispatch Computer Aided Dispatch system, local records, the State TIME system for law enforcement records (driver license, vehicle registration, wanted persons, etc.), and to the internet/email via the county's network.

Access to E-9-1-1 telephone circuits will be through TELCO pedestal plug-in cabling at a few designated sites throughout



Photo by Keith Butler

LaCrosse County. Amateur radio base units and a weather monitoring station will also be installed in the dispatch area.

The driver's compartment shares the dual-head VHF and 800 MHz trunking radios with the Incident

Command area and has siren and warning light controls. We will be installing the green Incident Command Post strobe, too.

The anticipated completion date is April 30, 2004.

State volunteer group on the move

By Steve Hutson
WI VOAD Chairperson

The Wisconsin Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (WI VOAD) has reorganized and is re-energized.

In December, the statewide group adopted new bylaws, elected officers and set goals that they hope will further its contribution to disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

One of the new programs is Early Response Task Force that is designed to provide valuable assistance to local officials in the aftermath a disaster.

The new officers elected are: Chairperson - Steve Hutson, Milwaukee County VOAD, Vice Chairperson - Terri Leece, Salvation Army, Secretary - Pat Simmons, Badger Chapter American Red Cross, At Large Member - Steve Davis, Wisconsin United Church of Christ Disaster Response.

Stop by the WI VOAD booth at the Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security in March in Appleton and pick up a summary of the plan.



City Emergency

Racine emergency responders provide medical care to "victims" as part of an exercise at City Hall to test their small pox emergency response plans.

Photo by David Maack

Severe weather season will soon be here

By Barb Fischer
WEM Asst. Public Assistance Officer

Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and the National Weather Service (NWS) have teamed up once again to remind people about the hazards associated with severe weather. Wisconsin's Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week is scheduled for April 19-23, 2004.

To help promote the annual weather campaign, Green Bay Packer Marco Rivera videotaped a public service announcement that will be aired on television stations across the state beginning the end of March.

The PSA's were taped in November outside of Lambeau Field in Green Bay. In the 30 and 60 second spots, Marco reminds people to take cover when severe weather strikes.

In addition to the TV spots, Marco taped severe weather awareness messages for radio stations. Both TV and radio stations will be encouraged to run the spots throughout the spring and summer months.

Both the video and audio cuts will be posted on the Wisconsin Emergency Management website and will be available to download. In addition, VHS tapes will be distributed to county emergency management directors in March.

Governor Doyle will be issuing a proclamation declaring the week of April 19-23, 2004 as Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week. The statewide tornado drill will be held on April 22. This year, the mock tornado warnings will be staggered throughout the state at



Film crews videotape Marco Rivera of the Green Bay Packers as the Pro Bowl player reminds people what to do during tornado watches and warnings. Photo by Barb Fischer

times designated by the National Weather Service.

Once again, WEM with help from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, will send tornado and severe weather information packets to school districts in the state. Many schools

participate during the annual statewide tornado drill.

According to the NWS, Wisconsin averages 20 tornadoes a year. In 2003, 14 tornadoes touched down with most ranging from F0 to F1, fortunately causing minor damage.

TORNADO WATCH: Tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms.

TORNADO WARNING: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. If a tornado warning is issued for your area and the sky becomes threatening, move to your pre-designated place of safety.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WATCH: Severe thunderstorms are possible in your area.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING: Severe thunderstorms are occurring.

Remember, tornadoes occasionally develop in areas in which a severe thunderstorm watch or warning is in effect. Remain alert to signs of an approaching tornado and seek shelter if threatening conditions exist.





Where's Smokey Bear?

State and local agencies plan a response to a mock forest fire in northern Grant County during a functional exercise held January 21, 2004 at the Muscoda Fire Department. From the left are Greg Matthews, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Chuck Horn, DNR Warden, Julie Loeffelholz, Grant County Emergency Management and Barb Wolf, DNR Warden. The exercise was part of DNR's South Central Region 2004 Incident Management Team training. Photo by Rick Wojciak

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As public safety agencies, it is important that the FCC provide guidance. Many local and state agencies want to know how to make best use of the public safety spectrum of frequencies and still have a level of communications interoperability that is financially acceptable.

It is far to early in the process to determine if Wisconsin will go to a 800 MHz or 700 MHz system or trunked VHF or set up regional communication systems based on need.

In addition, OJA is also working with Wisconsin Department of Administration Procurement to allow public safety agencies to use state pricing when purchasing equipment. This effort should help reduce the cost of communications equipment.

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